

Appl. No. 09/694,519
Atty. Docket No. 8311
Amdt. dated February 6, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December 12, 2003
Customer No. 27752

REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 17-26, and 28-30 are pending in the application. Claims 1-14, 18-26, and 28 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 15-16, and 27 are canceled without prejudice.

Claim 17 is amended. Support for the amendment, *inter alia* is found at page 8, line 8 to page 9, line 26.

In addition, new Claims 29 and 30 have been added. Support for the new claims, *inter alia* is found at page 15, lines 15-23 of the specification.

It is believed these changes do not involve any introduction of new matter. Consequently, entry of these changes is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 USC 112, First Paragraph

Applicants have cancelled rejected claim 16 and request that all the rejections directed to claim 16 be withdrawn.

The Final Office Action suggested that claim 17 was objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claim and is allowable provided that it was resubmitted as an independent claim with all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Further, in a telephonic interview on January 21, 2004 with Applicants' agent, Mr. Naishadh N. Desai, Examiner confirmed that claim 17 will be allowable, if presented as an independent claim incorporating all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended claim 17 to make it an independent claim incorporating all the limitations of the base claim 16. There are no intervening claims. Applicants have added claims 29-30, that are dependent on claims 17. No new matter is added.

Conclusion

In light of the above remarks, it is requested that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection. Early and favorable action in the case is respectfully requested.

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Applicants have made an earnest effort to place their application in proper form and to distinguish the invention as now claimed from the applied references. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, entry of the amendments presented herein, and allowance of Claims 17, and 29-30.

Respectfully submitted,
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